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DPW HOSTS UTILITY TRAINING FOR EMERGENCY ROADSIDE CONTRACTORS

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS – The Department of Public Works (DPW) hosted a utility training on St. Thomas for emergency roadside contractors and DPW personnel on September 1. The purpose of the training was to educate roadside crews on how to properly handle fallen utility service cables and electrical lines. The department recognizes the importance of ensuring proper safety protocols are followed, while clearing roadways in the aftermath of a weather system.

In 2017, after Hurricane's Irma and Maria, several utility cables were cut as the department and its contractors worked to quickly clear roadways. In an effort to mitigate the safety and service repercussions that come with cutting fallen lines, the department provided this training to support emergency personnel, as well as the utility providers.

"The training was very informative and necessary," said Assistant Commissioner Dennis Brow who led this initiative. "We took a proactive approach in our hurricane preparedness efforts, working to alleviate challenges before they arise. We are taking a collaborative approach to our disaster preparedness and response, and know this will reduce our critical recovery time in the immediate aftermath of any disaster that impacts the Territory."

Representatives from VIYA and the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority presented standard operating procedures on how to manage wires when clearing roadways. The department will conduct another utility training next week on St. Croix. Due to social distancing guidelines and space limitations, this training is only open to DPW's emergency contractors for roadside clearance.

The department appreciates the community's patience as they work to improve road conditions in the territory.

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